A Copy of An

ADDRESS

To the

KING

By the

Biſhop of OXON,

To be

Subſcribed by the Clergy of his Dioceſs; with the Reaſons for the Subſcription to the *Addreſs*: And the Reaſons againſt it

To the Kings moſt Excelent Majeſty.

WHEREAS, *in Your Majeſties Royal* Declaration *lately Publiſhed, You have been Graciouſly pleaſed to Declare, That Your Majeſty will Protect and Maintain the* Arch. Biſhops, Biſhops, *and* Clergy, *and all other Subjects of the* Church of England *in the free Exerciſe of their Religion, as by Law Eſtabliſhed, and the full and quiet Enjoyment of all their Poſſeſſions, without Moleſtation or Diſturbance whatſoever; we cannot but think ourſelves obliged in Duty and Gratitude, to return Your Majeſty Our moſt Hearty Thanks for thoſe Gracious Expreſſions of your Kindneſs, and for all Your former Aſſurances of Your Royal Favour to the* Church of England; *And to expreſs our Loyalty as becomes the True Sons of the* Church of England, *and Your Majeſties obedient Subjects and Servants.*

The Reaſons for the Subſcription to the Addreſs *are but two.*

I. FIrſt, That it may continue the Kings Favour, whereas the Omiſſion may irritate the Treaſury to call upon the Fifth Bond for firſt Fruits at full worth.

II. Secondly,

II. Secondly, That it will teſtifie Our unity with, and Submiſſion to the Biſhop requiring their *Addreſs*, and prhaps expecting it upon Our Canonical Obedience; there being nothing in the *Addreſs Præter licitum & Honeſtum.*

The Reaſons againſt it are many. To Inſtance in Four

I. AS to Our Poſſeſſions, 'tis but Thanks for His Majeſties, continuing Our Legal Rights, which either Equally concerns all States of Men in the Kingdom, and ought properly to be conſider'd in Parliament; or elſe it ſuppoſes Our Poſſeſſions leſs Legal and more Arbitrary than other Subjects.

II. As to the free exerciſe of our Religion, It unneceſſarily Herds us among the Various Sects under the *Toleration*, who for that Favour in Suſpending the Laws have led the way to ſuch *Addreſſes*, Depending for Protection upor no Legal Eſtabliſhment, but entirely upon Soveraign Pleaſure and Indulgence, which at pleaſure is Revocable.

III. This *Addreſs* when Subſcribed, is either deſign'd in the Name of the *Church of England*, and then ought to have had its Birth at *Lambeth*, or a Synodal Convocation; or elſe in the Name of this Dioceſs only, which will disjoint us both among Ourſelves, who differ about it, and the Body of the National *Clergy*, who as we are Aſſur'd, diſlike it in the preſent Circumſtances; ſo that the inevitable Conſequences of this *Addreſs* (ſet on foot by two or three Biſhops, independent upon their Metropolitan, and without the Previous Concurrence of the reſt of their Order) muſt be a fatal Diviſion among the *Clergy*, and either beget a new Schiſm, or widen the old ones, which are already Deplorable which above all things is likely to haſten our ruine and promote the Intreaging projects of our Adverſaries.

IV. It forfeits the preſent Reputation we have with the Nobility, Gentry, and Commonality of our Communion, and may tempt them not only to diſguſt us for our raſh Compliance with ſuſpected Artifices (which may rise up hereafter againſt Us to Our own and the Churches Prejudice) But alſo to waver in the ſtedfaſtneſs of their Profeſſion, when they ſee us owning the Exerciſe of Our Eſtabliſhed own Religion to be Precarious.

WHerfore may it not be expedient humbly to remonſtrate Ourſelves in this Affair to Our Dioceſan, and humbly deſire beſeech him not to (without Conſulting Us) Our Act in a thing of ſo Publick and National a Concernment, in which We conceive Ourſelves obliged to proceed upon mature Deliberation and United Meaſures, which under God and the King are likely to be our greateſt Safeguard.

As to the continuance of the Kings Favour.

IF the known Loyal Principles and practices of the *Church of England*, pencliarly evident to this Prince in the *Bill of Excluſion* and *Monmouth* will not Secure it, this *Addreſs*, (Which only Copies out *Fanatical* Thanksgiving) will not. Yet it might be thought Expedient for the *Church of England* to Addreſs for the Contents of that *Declaration*, which promiſes to Engage the Two Houſes of *Parliament*, in Concurrence to ſo Excellent a Work; as if the favour of Continuing the Laws, (which perhaps cannot be Repeal'd) were as great as the abrogateing the Laws for the Diſſenters Sakes, which is the reaſon of the Thanks in the *Presbyterian*, and *Independant Addreſſes*.

As to the Biſhop.

THis *Addreſs* is no Inſtance of Canonical Obedience that we know of, neither is Our Unity with him ſuch, as to Oblige Us to diſjoint from Our Metropolitan and National Clergy; neither ſeems Our Biſhop to have had any Paternal Regard of Us, unleſs it be in Treating of Us like Children of a very weak and paſſive Minority, when he requires Our Subſcription to a Formed Addreſs, wherein He hath neither Conſulted Us, nor given us leave to Word Ourſelves, or ſpeak Our own Senſe.

And till Biſhops at their Confirmation declare what Faith they are of, as they did in the *Primitive* Church. (for which there are the ſame Reaſons now) Our Unity with him muſt either be with Communication as to the whole Church, or we may follow him We know not whether.

FINIS.

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